**LSAC Pacific Region Conference, December 10, 2018**

**Simon Fraser University, Surrey Campus**

**Session Descriptions**

9:50 – 10:30 – **The Student Learning Commons’ Breaking Barriers Initiatives: An Overview** – Donna McGee Thompson, Ruth Silverman and Cynthia Wright, Simon Fraser University

*The theme for this conference emerged from the SFU Student Learning Commons’ (SLC’s) 2018-19 strategic initiative of “Identifying and addressing institutional/structural barriers and enhancing our services by actively attending to considerations of equity, diversity, and inclusion.”* *We have in fact been working for the past few years on identifying and reducing these barriers. This presentation will survey the SLC’s ongoing efforts to reduce barriers through policy and procedural changes, as well as through working with key campus partners such as the Indigenous Student Centre and the Centre for Accessible Learning.*

10:45-11:45 – **Universal Design I: Incorporating Universal Design into Learning Centre Work** – Seanna Takacs, Kwantlen Polytechnic University and Holly Salmon, Douglas College

*Relying on the seven principles of universal design as a framework for the presentation, we will show how these principles can be incorporated into Learning Centre work, both as a means of connecting students with specific accessibility needs and in modeling the way we train peer tutors.*

*In the Summer of 2017, the Douglas College Learning Centre revised the training program for new peer tutors with several goals in mind. One of those was to begin to incorporate the 7 principles of Universal Design. Around the same time, principles of UDL were established as a goal in the academic plan at KPU and was conveyed as a means of student support both at The Learning Centre and Accessibility Services. This presentation will highlight what changes were made based on universal design principles, and what short-term effects they have had both in terms of addressing accessibility but also moving beyond accessibility: including increased engagement in the training, opportunities for mentorship, and shifts in problem-solving by tutors.  The focus of providing this information is twofold: a) to share a learning journey and discuss easy ways to start to change the way training is done in order to improve accessibility; b) to share knowledge on the ways that UDL act to change the story around academic accommodations and why that shift is focus is essential in the context of accessibility services. The training and learning are both works-in-progress, and revisions are being incorporated as we understand more about the possibilities and resources available.*

*The presentation will incorporate a learning activity where participants identify areas to incorporate universal design principals into their work.*

12:45-1:30 – **Universal Design II: Adapting to UDL – Using Multi-Modality and Creativity to Move Towards Universality** – Adam Vincent, Kwantlen Polytechnic University/ University of British Columbia

*Post-secondary institutions are seeing changes in the make-up of their incoming domestic and international student populations. Today’s domestic students have encountered recent changes to BC’s high school curriculum, seeing more freedom in how and what they learn, for which the university must adapt. Our international student populations are also coming in significant numbers, from countries with vastly different education systems, ready to experience our North American system. They arrive now to find our system in a state of flux. With their initial expectations often unmet, it is now up to institutions to find ways to help them reach their educational goals in different ways. In response to this change in student populations and student needs, there is a push towards curriculum that adheres to UDL (universal design for learning) standards (Meyer, Rose & Gordon, 2014). This presentation will highlight some of my practical experiences around using technology and creativity in the classroom (teaching KPU’s EDUC 1100: Introduction to Higher Education course) to meet the UDL mandate and how those same practices have been adopted/adapted in my other role as a Learning Strategist in KPU’s Learning Centre.*

*Reference*

*Meyer, A., Rose, D. H., & Gordon, D. (2014). Universal design for learning: Theory and practice. Wakefield, Massachusetts: CAST Professional Publishing.*

1:40-2:25 – **Serving the Learning Needs of STEM Students** – Richard (Zack) Zajchowski, Camosun College

*Due to the challenging mathematical and technical nature of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programs, the learning skills needs of first year STEM students are both very pressing and somewhat different from those of students in most other faculties. Unfortunately, many STEM students, like many of their post- secondary counterparts, do not tend to think much about how to improve their learning skills. Those few STEM students who do seek out learning skills help, whether it be institutional or online, often find that the help does not specifically address the quantitative problem-solving issues they routinely face. In an effort to deal with this situation, Camosun College runs sections of a compulsory, credit-bearing learning skills course entitled Learning Skills for Technology or LRNS 102 that is part of the first year curriculum in both computer studies and engineering access. This session will present an overview of this LRNS 102 course content including a look at some of the resources used as well as an exploration of some of the issues involved in offering such required courses. There should also be some time for attendees to explore ways to offer similar specialized learning skills help at their institutions.*

2:35-3:20 – **Working Toward Reconciliation in the Learning Centre *–***Emily Simpson, Vancouver Community College

*During 2017/18, the VCC Learning Centre committed to team education around Indigenous history and settler issues in Canada through a series of workshops developed in collaboration with the Indigenous Education and Community Engagement (IECE) department at VCC. Our goal was to educate ourselves in order to work toward making our spaces more welcoming to Indigenous students, better serving all VCC students, and participating in reconciliation work at the college. We planned a series of four educational workshops which alternated between work on our own and facilitated sessions by IECE, culminating with team participation in a Kairos blanket exercise. Workshops focused on historical knowledge, current barriers and issues facing Indigenous students as a result of settler actions, the Indigenous Education Protocol for Colleges and Universities, and an introduction to Indigenous beliefs and practices around teaching and learning. The final activity in the series was a Kairos blanket exercise led by IECE. Through this work we identified actions we can take as a department towards reconciliation including continued education, increased Indigenous posters on history, language and principles of learning, materials in our collections, outreach through IECE to post jobs in our department, collaboration on lunch and learn workshops for Indigenous students, unceded territorial acknowledgement in coordinator workshops, dialog with other departments about our experience, and supported staff time to attend Reconciliation events in the college.*